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ABSTRACT

In 1984-85, the Bilingual Mini-School was in its second year of a 3-year funding cycle at Samuel Gompers High School (Bronx, New York). The program provided instruction in English as a second language (ESL) and native language arts, in addition to bilingual instruction in mathematics, science, and social studies, to 84 Spanish-speaking students of limited English proficiency (LEP). In addition, program students were enrolled in several specialized vocational courses in the mainstream. The program proposed to meet students' academic and vocational/technical needs by minimizing the linguistic barriers that prevented them from participating in a mainstream instructional setting. The program also aimed at helping students meet the academic requirements for a high school diploma. Title VII funds supported all program staff positions. Development activities for staff included monthly meetings, attendance at workshops, and university courses. Efforts to involve parents of participating students in school activities were made through home letters and phone calls. Quantitative analysis of student achievement data indicates that: (1) Passing rates in English as a second language courses were very high in both the fall and spring; and (2) Overall, 68 percent of program students passed courses in mathematics, science, social studies, and Spanish, thus meeting the proposed objectives. (KH)

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SAMUEL GOMPERS HIGH SCHOOL

BILINGUAL MINI-SCHOOL

1984-1985

OEA Evaluation Report

O.E.A. Evaluation Section Report

Robert Tobias, Administrator of Evaluation
Judith Stern Torres, Senior Manager

Grant Number: G003CH-4376

SAMUEL GOMPERS HIGH SCHOOL

BILINGUAL MINI-SCHOOL

1984-1985

Principal:
Alexander Galardo

Director:
Rita M. Puente

Prepared by the
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A SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This program, in its second year of a three-year funding cycle, provided instruction in English as a second language (E.S.L.) and native language arts, in addition to bilingual instruction in mathematics, science, and social studies, to 84 Spanish-speaking students of limited English proficiency (LEP). In addition, program students were enrolled in several specialized vocational courses in the mainstream.

The program proposed to meet students' academic and vocational/technical needs by helping them overcome the linguistic barriers that prevented them from successfully participating in a mainstream instructional setting. The program also aimed at helping students meet the academic requirements for a high school diploma in as short a time as possible.

Title VII funds supported all program staff positions. Development activities for staff members included monthly staff meetings, attendance at outside workshops, and university courses. Efforts to involve parents of participating students in school activities were made through home letters and phone calls.

Program objectives were assessed in English language development, mathematics, science, social studies, and Spanish (teacher-made examinations). Quantitative analysis of student achievement data indicates that:

--Passing rates in English as a second language courses were high in both the fall (79 percent) and spring (70 percent), pointing to satisfactory achievement in English language development.

--Overall, 68 percent of program students passed courses in mathematics, science, social studies, and Spanish, thus meeting the proposed objectives.

The following recommendations are aimed at improving the overall effectiveness of the program:

-- Conducting teacher-training activities in the following areas: the role and effective use of the paraprofessional in and outside the vocational classroom.

-- Giving greater attention to increasing students' career awareness, developing career/survival skills curriculum, and training staff members in the use of career-related curriculum materials.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The production of this report, as of all Office of Educational Assessment Bilingual Education Evaluation Unit reports, is the result of a cooperative effort of regular staff and consultants. In addition to those whose names appear on the cover, Eulalia Cabrera has interpreted findings, integrated material into reports, and has written report summaries. Patricia Fitzpatrick has spent many hours creating, correcting, and maintaining data files. Finally, Joseph Rivera has worked intensively to produce, correct, duplicate, and disseminate reports. Without their able and faithful participation, the unit could not have handled such a large volume of work and still produced quality evaluation reports.

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BILINGUAL MINI-SCHOOL
SAMUEL GOMPERS HIGH SCHOOL

Location:	455 Southern Boulevard Bronx, New York 10455
Year of Operation:	1984-1985, Second year of three-year funding cycle
Target Languages:	Spanish
Number of Participants:	84 Students
Principal:	Alexander Galardo
Project Director:	Rita M. Puente

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

OVERVIEW

The Bilingual Mini-School at Samuel Gompers High School is a bilingual (Spanish/English) program in the second year of a three-year funding cycle. Its aim is to enable students with limited English proficiency (LEP) to acquire sufficient skills in English to benefit from the school's technical course offerings by the end of the tenth grade. The instructional approach seeks to integrate academic areas, career awareness, and survival skills with the current vocational technical curriculum.

In the 1983-84 academic year, the program provided native language instruction, bilingual instruction in content and vocational areas, and instruction in English as a second language (E.S.L.). The program's main goal is to mainstream LEP students and to help them meet academic requirements for the high school diploma in as short a time as possible.

Another important aim of the program is to make students realize that the doors to technical vocational preparation, once closed because

of language barriers, will now be open to them through bilingual services. Thus the program prepares LEP students for both employment and college once they complete their schooling at Samuel Gompers.

ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL

The project director, student advisor, resource teacher, five content-area teachers, and four paraprofessionals make up the program staff. The project director's position is funded by Title VII and she is supervised by the assistant principal of the academic department (see Figure 1). The project director is in charge of testing and placing students in the various program classes. She also oversees academic guidance of program students, coordination of program activities and fiscal matters, staff evaluation and training, and development of curricular activities.

The resource teacher identifies and obtains educational materials needed by the program. She also is in charge of developing curriculum materials for bilingual courses and job/career survival training materials to be added to existing courses.

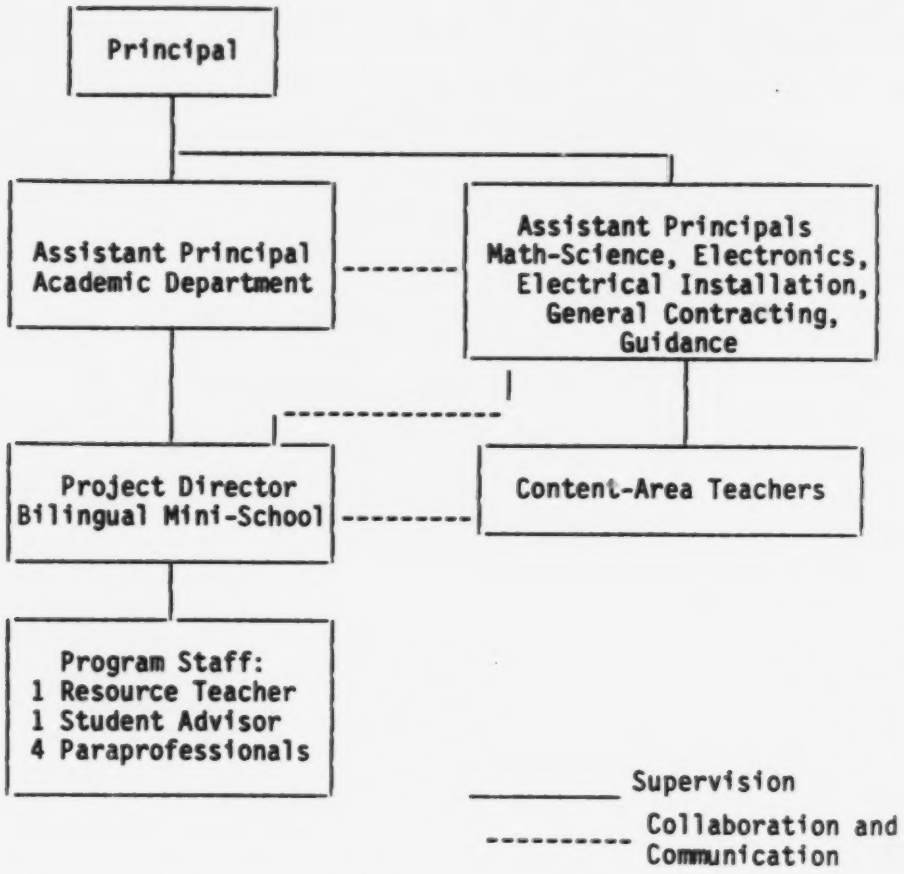
The student advisor serves as grade advisor to program students, and communicates with parents regarding the progress of their children, especially those with academic and behavior problems. She is in charge of acquiring guidance resource materials, contacting community guest speakers for presentations to students, and organizing and coordinating field trips. She also assists the project director with administrative tasks.

The paraprofessionals help students individually in the classroom. They also help classroom teachers with paper work, proctoring, and correcting papers. The office aide performs secretarial and clerical duties of the program office.

The student advisor was on a leave of absence during the fall semester, and the resource teacher was on a leave of absence during the spring. These events have, to some extent, influenced the overall achievement of program goals during this second year. Another problem facing the program in this area is the lack of permanently licensed bilingual content-area teachers in the various subject areas; most of the five bilingual teachers had per diem licensee status.

FIGURE 1

Organization of the Bilingual Mini-School



II. STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Fifty-eight percent of the 84 ninth- and tenth-grade Hispanic students served by the program are recent immigrants. The other program students were Spanish-speakers born in the United States (see Table 1). Although the school is coeducational, 80 percent of the students are male, indicating that electronics careers still do not attract as many females as males. As seen in Table 2, 52 percent of the students were overage for their grade placement. Table 3 indicates that 70 percent of the program students were ninth graders and 86 percent of the students were new to the program in September; 14 percent of the students had been in the program for two years.

By the end of the school year, 23 students had left the program: 15 transferred to another school, 6 were fully mainstreamed, and 2 left school for employment.

TABLE 1

Number and Percent of Program Students by Country of Birth

Country of Birth	Number	Percent
United States	31	42
Puerto Rico	28	38
Colombia	6	8
Dominican Republic	5	7
Mexico	3	4
Ecuador	1	1
TOTAL	74[a]	100

[a]Data were missing for ten students.

- Forty-two percent of the program students were born in the United States.
- Thirty-eight percent of the program students were born in Puerto Rico; the remaining students were born in the Caribbean and Central and South America.

TABLE 2

Number of Program Students by Age and Grade

Age	Grade 9	Grade 10	Total
14		1	7
15			25
16	21		29
17	11	8	19
18	0	2	2
19	0	2	2
TOTAL	59	25	84

Overage Students			
Number	32	12	44
Percent	54	48	52

Note. Shaded boxes indicate expected age range for grade.

- Fifty-two percent of the program students are overage for their grade placement.
- The highest percentage of overage students is in grade nine.

TABLE 3

Time Spent in the Bilingual Program[a]

(As of June 1985)

Time Spent in Bilingual Program	Number of Students Grade 9	Grade 10	Total
1 Academic Year	54	18	72
2 Academic Years	5	7	12
TOTAL	59	25	84

[a]Rounded to the nearest year.

- Seventy-two students (86 percent) have been in the program for one year.

- Twelve students (14 percent) have been in the program for two years.

III. FINDINGS

The findings presented in this section are specifically related to the objectives proposed in the evaluation design included in the program proposal. They include objectives measurable by standardized test results, an examination of program materials and records, on-site observations, and interviews with relevant personnel. The findings are presented by objectives, as proposed to and accepted by the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA), U.S. Department of Education, and are based on available data.

OBJECTIVE 1: Students participating in E.S.L. classes will master an average of one curricular objective per month of instruction on the Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test (CREST).

Program Activities

Students were selected for the program primarily on the basis of the results of the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) obtained in spring, 1984. Students who scored below the twenty-first percentile on the English part of the LAB were then tested on an individual basis to corroborate the results.

Students were placed in E.S.L. classes according to their level of proficiency as determined by their scores on the LAB and the Criterion Referenced English Syntax Test (CREST). During the fall and spring semesters, three E.S.L. courses were offered on beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels.

A member of the evaluation team observed a beginning E.S.L class in which 16 students were present. The first half of the lesson was devoted to instruction in spelling and reading comprehension skills. The teacher then asked students several questions about words that were written on the blackboard; the correct answers were also written on the board.

For the second part of the lesson, the class was divided into two groups; the teacher read aloud a story to one group and a paraprofessional reinforced vocabulary with the other. The material used in the class contained many exercises in reading skills development.

Student Achievement in E.S.L.

The proposed objective for English language achievement could not be evaluated because data concerning students' performance on the CREST were not provided.

For descriptive purposes, Table 4 presents students' passing rates in E.S.L. courses. Examination of Table 4 reveals that, compared to standards set by other Title VII high school programs, passing rates were very high both in the fall (79.3 percent) and spring terms (70.2 percent).

TABLE 4

Passing Rates in E.S.L. Courses

Course	Fall		Spring		Overall
	Number of Students	Percent Passing	Number of Students	Percent Passing	Passing Rate
E.S.L. (1,2,3)	58	79.3	57	70.2	74.7

- In comparison to citywide standards, passing rates were very high both in the fall (79.3 percent) and spring (70.2 percent) semesters.

OBJECTIVE 2: Sixty-five percent of program students enrolled in content-area classes (mathematics, science, social studies, and Spanish) will pass them.

Program Activities

The program offered two native language arts (N.L.A.) classes each semester. Both met five periods a week and had paraprofessional assistance.

Program students were enrolled in bilingual mathematics, science, and social studies courses that met five periods a week. Math offerings included fundamental math for ninth and tenth graders; science courses included general science and biology; and social studies courses included topics ranging from prehistoric cultures to the industrial revolution. These courses were parallel to mainstream offerings because bilingual students take the same Regents' examinations. Paraprofessional assistance was available in all content-area classes.

A member of the evaluation team observed an N.L.A. class. The lesson was well-organized and covered fixed materials from the text. Students responded frequently to the teacher's questions. The teacher's explanations were clear and the pace of the lesson appeared appropriate for the students. Materials in English were distributed to supplement the aims of the Spanish lesson.

In a mathematics class observed by a member of the evaluation team, the teacher and students were reviewing math skills by practicing items on previous Regents Competency Tests in mathematics. The teacher used Spanish for directions, explanations, and summaries, and the test items were in English. During the review, the teacher and the paraprofessional assisted individual students.

In an observed social studies class, the teacher lectured on Napoleon's conquest of Europe. Through a balanced use of Spanish and English, excellent handouts, and paraprofessional assistance, the aims of the lesson were achieved.

A bilingual science class was also observed. The lesson "the effect of heredity on human beings," was conducted in Spanish while the text and accompanying exercises were in English. The science teacher lectured while a paraprofessional circled the room to encourage student attention. The students' participation was limited to written tasks and listening to the teacher's explanations.

The resource teacher also tutored students in content-area subjects as part of the program's services.

Student Achievement in Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Spanish

Table 5 presents the passing rates for program students in mathematics science, social studies, and Spanish courses each semester. A weighted average for the year was also computed.

Examination of Table 5 reveals that students achieved an overall passing rate of 68.2 percent, thus meeting the program objective. The highest passing rate was among by math students in the fall (81.4 percent). Students enrolled in social studies in the spring term had the lowest passing rate (57.6 percent). There was a general decline from fall to spring, except in vocational courses.

TABLE 5

Passing Rates in Content-Area Courses

Course	Fall		Spring		Overall Passing Rate
	Number of Students	Percent Passing	Number of Students	Percent Passing	
Mathematics	59	81.4	59	57.6	69.5
Science	59	76.3	59	69.5	72.9
Social Studies	59	61.0	59	57.6	59.3
Vocational	41	70.7	36	72.2	71.6
Spanish	44	77.5	41	61.0	69.5
Total		73.3		63.0	68.2

- Overall, 68.2 percent of the program students enrolled in content-area classes achieved a passing grade. The stated objective was not met in social studies, where only 61 percent of the students in the fall and 57.6 percent of the students in the spring achieved passing rates.

OBJECTIVE 3: Eighty percent of the students participating in career awareness activities will improve their knowledge of career and survival/life skills as demonstrated by either:

1. passing teacher-made tests in instructional units relative to the above areas; or

2. achieving a satisfactory rating in the mastery of job-related activities (interview skills, telephoning, writing a resume).

Program Activities

According to the project director, formal bilingual career-awareness classes were not offered. To a limited extent, information about careers available to bilinguals and the necessary job-related skills was given in E.S.L. classes and in the program office. Skills taught included how to make phone inquiries about job advertisements; how to write letters applying for a job; how to write a resume; and how to perform on a job interview.

Program students were enrolled with mainstream students in various vocational/career-oriented courses taught entirely in English (see Table 6). New York City curriculum was used in these specialized courses and paraprofessionals were present to assist LEP students.

During the project's first year of operation, a career education center was established with a large collection of materials and information on native language arts, bilingual content areas, and bilingual vocational areas. The long-range plan is to make this collection part of a research center for professionals interested in bilingual vocational education. Articles on the center appeared in two New York newspapers, La Prensa and El Diario, and two newsletters were released describing the program and its resource room.

TABLE 6

Non-Bilingual Specialized Courses

Fall and Spring

Course Title	Number of Classes	Paraprof. Assistance	Total Register	Title VII Register
General Contracting	1	Yes	40	2
Electronics	1	Yes	35	14
Electrical Installation	3	Yes	70	12
Word Processing	2	Yes	60	2
Data Processing	2	Yes	75	45

Counseling services were especially important to students, not only in the vocational area but in other areas as well. The bilingual office has an open-door policy for its students. The student advisor and the school's family assistant are available at all times to prevent problems from overwhelming the students. The staff felt that immediate assistance would help in lessening student attrition. The family assistant was instrumental in problem-solving in the classrooms and served as a crisis-intervention agent. He also aided students in improving their relationship with the non-bilingual faculty.

Student Achievement in Career and Survival Skills

As no bilingual career-awareness classes were offered, the proposed objective could not be evaluated.

OBJECTIVE 4: At least one curriculum unit will be developed or identified in each of the following areas: exploring careers, school survival skills, job survival skills, and community survival/life skills.

Program Activities

According to the project director, after evaluating the needs of program students, curricula were developed for native language arts classes and for all three levels of E.S.L. instruction. Two documents, entitled "Job-Opportunities in the Field of Foreign Languages," and "The Bilingual Mini-School," were also reviewed by the evaluation team, thus partially meeting the program objective. The project director stated that a unit on career survival skills was in the planning stage, indicating that the program is on its way to fulfilling this objective.

OBJECTIVE 5: All teachers serving participating students will receive training in the use of the curricular materials developed or identified above.

Program Activities

During the project's second year, staff development activities were limited to bimonthly meetings of the program staff and teachers to review program objectives and share information.

The project director and the student advisor attended workshops sponsored by OBEMLA on student testing, regents diploma requirements, and computers as instructional tools. According to the project director, plans are under way to plan staff development activities with the Multi-functional Support Service Center at Teachers College.

Since training sessions were not scheduled for teachers during this year, the program objective was not achieved.

OBJECTIVE 6: By June 1984, at least two teachers will take six credits at colleges or universities in areas related to E.S.L., bilingual education, and career education.

Program Activities

According to the project director, the student advisor took an administration course at Bank Street College of Education in New York City, and another staff member was planning to take computer courses during the summer. Thus, the stated objective was partially met.

OBJECTIVE 7: Parents of participating students will be informed as to program activities, relevant aspects of school rules and activities, and student progress by means of the following: an orientation session; at least two informative flyers; telephone contacts for academic warnings, disciplinary problems, as the need arises.

Program Activities

Letters describing the program, testing schedules, and disciplinary action were sent to parents of program students in an attempt to involve them in school activities. In addition, many parents were contacted by telephone during the academic year on an as-needed basis. Thus the program objective was partly met in this area.

Attendance of Program Students

The program did not propose an objective related to student attendance; however, the attendance rate for program students was 87.68 percent, approximately 9 percentage points above the schoolwide attendance rate (78.59 percent).

A z-test for the significance of a proportion* indicated that the program attendance rate is significantly higher than the school attendance rate.

*Bruning, J.L. and Kintz, B.L.; Computational Handbook of Statistics; Scott, Foreman and Company, 1968.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

In its second year of Title VII funding, the Bilingual Mini-School has achieved moderate success in achieving its instructional and non-instructional objectives.

The content areas were taught in both English and Spanish, and para-professionals were available in each class to assist teachers. However, most of the instruction observed was lecturing to the whole class, and the paraprofessionals appeared to be underutilized during class time. A tutorial system, whereby paraprofessionals provide individual help to students, would make better use of the paraprofessionals' time.

There was little documentation of activities to increase students' awareness of careers and to develop life skills, or of the development of a curriculum unit for this purpose. It is highly recommended that greater attention be given to this area in the near future.

Staff development was almost non-existent. Although some effort has been made to contact the Multifunctional Support Service Center at Teachers College, workshops or training sessions have not been scheduled to date. This component needs to be implemented next year, with greater attention given to the original objectives of career awareness and E.S.L.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made for possible program improvement:

1. Teacher-training activities that focus on the role and effective use of paraprofessionals inside and outside the classroom might be conducted.

2. The program should give greater attention to achieving its goals of increasing students' career awareness, developing a career/survival skills curriculum, and training staff members in the use of career-related curricular materials.